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Job vacancies

Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods

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Job vacancies are an indicator of unmet labour demand, and complement indicators of underutilised labour supply such as unemployment and underemployment. Job vacancy data are used by Commonwealth and State government departments, employer associations and trade unions as a leading economic indicator and for econometric forecasting.

Concepts and definitions

"A 'vacant post' can be said to exist if an employer before or during the reference period has taken concrete steps to find a suitable person to carry out a specific set of tasks and would have taken on (entered into a job contract with) such a person if she/he had been available during the reference period".

[International Labour Organisation, 15th ICLS, 1993 \(https://ilostat.ilo.org/about/standards/icls/\)](https://ilostat.ilo.org/about/standards/icls/)

There are currently no international recommendations or guidelines relating to job vacancies statistics. The concept of vacant post was discussed in the general report to the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians 1993, where the above definition was put forward.

Job vacancies statistics are collected in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Job Vacancies Survey (JVS). The ABS defines job vacancies in the JVS as employee jobs available for immediate filling on the actual survey reference day and for which employers have undertaken recruitment action. Recruitment action includes efforts to fill vacancies by advertising, by on site or online notices, by notifying employment agencies or trade unions and by contacting, interviewing or selecting applicants already registered with the enterprise or organisation.

Measures of job vacancies exclude:

- jobs not available for immediate filling on the survey reference day;

- jobs for which no recruitment action has been taken;
- jobs which became vacant on the survey reference day and were filled on the same day;
- jobs of less than one day's duration;
- jobs only available to be filled by internal applicants within an organisation;
- jobs to be filled by employees returning from paid or unpaid leave, or after industrial disputes;
- vacancies for work to be carried out by contractors; and
- jobs for which a person has been appointed but has not yet commenced duty.

Data sources

Data on job vacancies are available from the ABS, while data on the number of job advertisements are available from a number of other sources including the private sector. Job vacancies should not be confused with job advertisements. Job vacancies data may differ from data on the number of job advertisements for a number of reasons, including the multiple advertising of a single vacancy.

Estimates of job vacancies and job advertisements are available from:

- the ABS [Job Vacancies Survey \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/job-vacancies-australia/latest-release\)](#)
- the [ANZ-Indeed Job Ads \(https://www.media.anz.com/\)](#)
- the [SEEK Employment Index Report \(https://www.seek.com.au/about/news/seek-employment-reports/\)](#)
- the [Jobs and Skills Australia's Internet Vacancy Index \(https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/work/internet-vacancy-index\)](#)

ABS Job Vacancies Survey

Estimates from this survey are produced according to the definitions outlined above. For more information on the data content and methodology of this survey see the [Job Vacancies, Australia methodology \(/methodologies/job-vacancies-australia-methodology/aug-2023\)](#).

ANZ-Indeed Australian Job Ads

The ANZ produces a series of job advertisements based on counts of internet advertisements on selected employment internet sites. Readers should refer to the [ANZ-Indeed Australian Job Ads \(https://www.media.anz.com/\)](#) for more detail on the content and methodology of these series.

Counts of job advertisements can differ from counts of job vacancies for several reasons, including the multiple advertising of a single job. Further, recruitment through word of mouth, on site notices, etc., are included in JVS but are out of scope for the ANZ-Indeed Australian Job Ads.

SEEK Employment Index

SEEK produces a monthly Employment Index, which measures the number of new job ads posted on their website in a particular month. The series is adjusted to ensure that multiple postings count as one ad. The index is available in both original and seasonally adjusted terms. Readers should refer to the [SEEK Employment Index report \(https://www.seek.com.au/about/news/seek-employment-reports/\)](https://www.seek.com.au/about/news/seek-employment-reports/) for more detail on the content and methodology of these series.

Jobs and Skills Australia's Internet Vacancy Index

The Jobs and Skills Australia's Internet Vacancy Index produces four series:

- the Internet Vacancy Index (IVI), based on a count of newly lodged online vacancies on selected employment internet sites (from secondary sources);
- the Skilled IVI, based on counts of internet advertisements for skilled vacancies (the aggregation of Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) categories Professionals, and Technicians and Trade Workers);
- the Regional IVI, which provides indices for more detailed geographic areas; and
- the Detailed Occupational IVI, which provides indices for occupations based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

The Jobs and Skills Australia codes internet advertisements to occupation at the ANZSCO four digit level for Australia. See the [Jobs and Skills Australia's Internet Vacancy Index \(https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/data/internet-vacancy-index\)](https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/data/internet-vacancy-index) for more detail on the content and methodology of these series.